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148

MORRISON

JIMENEZ

LANNING

NEW X-MEN®

PLANET X

3 OF 5

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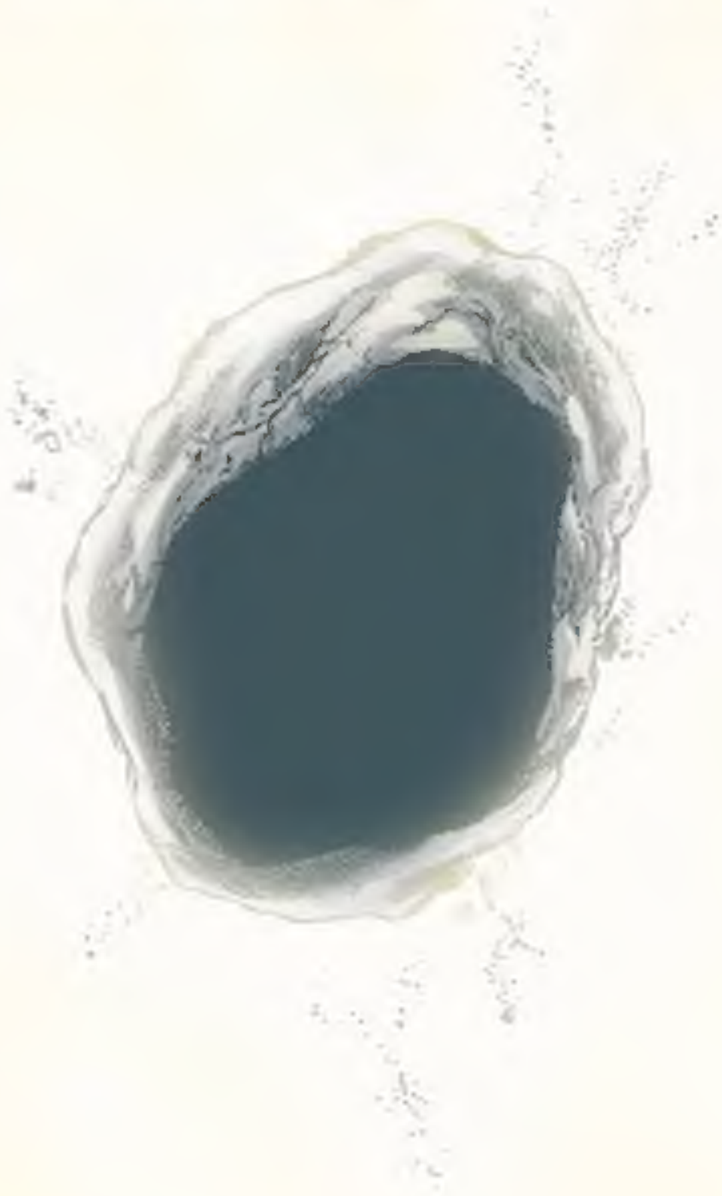
PREVIOUSLY IN NEW X-MEN...

Mere days ago, CYCLOPS and FANTOMEX accompanied WOLVERINE to an orbiting space station, the hidden site of the Weapon Plus Program. There, the long-lost Weapon X files containing all the secrets of Wolverine's identity were finally revealed to him. But the shocking truth was too much to handle...faced with the disturbing reality of exactly who—and what—he was, a distraught Wolverine detonated the entire Weapon Plus space station—and himself along with it.

Later, JEAN GREY used the Phoenix Force to determine that Wolverine was still alive, and quickly located him on a somewhat familiar yet abandoned asteroid complex. Soon after, the two X-Men slowly realized that someone had set them up and lured them to ASTEROID M...the former headquarters of one of their greatest foes. But before they could escape, an intense explosion ripped through the station, shattering everything in its path.

With all of the X-Men effectively neutralized, things at the Xavier Institute deteriorated from bad to horrific. The mutant healer known only as XORN, who had been living alongside the X-Men for months, revealed himself to be none other than MAGNETO, the Master of Magnetism and the X-Men's greatest foe.

Now, with the X-Men scattered to the farthest reaches of Earth and beyond, with New York City destroyed beyond all hope of repair, with the X-Men's headquarters all but decimated, and with PROFESSOR XAVIER crippled once again, Magneto stands poised atop Manhattan's tallest skyscraper, christening the city as New Genosha, and ready to take over the entire planet...



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The good news?

We probably have *air* for another 36 hours.

The bad news?

We'll hit the surface of the sun in 24.

Well, the station's too heavy to ***move*** and I tried to slow down the air molecules with my ***mind*** but everything's just too ***hot,*** Logan.

130 degrees and ***rising,*** 'less I can do something with the power, Jeannie.

What happened to ***him?***

Who, ***Weapon Fifteen?***

He dropped his guard in space and I ***gutted*** him.

He was all set to lead the charge against the whole ***mutant race,*** so don't give me a hard time.

I blew the Weapon Plus station to hell... we wrestled...

...and then we hit ***this rock.***

'Asteroid M', he used to call these hideouts...it swung right into place and ***waited*** in orbit until you got here.

The whole damn thing's been a ***trap,*** Jeannie, all the way down the ***line.***

An' I didn't see it...I didn't even ***smell*** him until now...

And you're sure it's ***him?***

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I *miss* Mister Xorn.

He used to tell us about China and Buddha and...*nice things*...

...when is he coming *back?*

He was a *fiction,* little Ernst. How often must I *explain?*

I made him up with the help of my *supporters* in China.

But Mister Xorn was *nice*...

There *is* no Xorn!

There is only I, *Magneto.*

I'm sorry, sir...I'm sorry.

Am...am I early for the *Brotherhood* meeting?

Chaos!
It's chaos in the streets, Magneto!
Eeuww
People need to know what's happening, soon!
Calm yourself, Toad!
I don't want *bad* news! Bring me *good* news!
Then feed me a few *soundbites* everyone can *understand.*
Ssseee, they really have *no* idea what you're *talking* about when you do all your big, Shakespearean stuff.
I'm only telling you what it's like out there...
...they're baying at the moon for some *action,* Magneto! A public hanging! *Anything!*
Since when did a good education and an extensive vocabulary become *handicaps?*
"Shakespearean stuff."
Stay there and wait with the others where you *belong,* Toad.
I'd like to be alone for a moment.
Charles...

I've fed them so many *lies,* old friend... engineered a species war in *your name.*

I don't expect I'll have much time before *reprisals* commence. You understand...I have to do something *unforgettable.*

Remember that reversal of the Earth's *magnetic poles* I talked about before but never went through with?

North will become *South.*

The event will *obliterate* the weak human, *rewire* mutant brains and alter planetary consciousness *forever.*

One of my *old* ideas, admittedly, but still a *good one.*

Each day, more and more mutants flock to my cause, empowered by supplies of the drug *Kick*.

Your timid, colorless leadership has been *forgotten*.

You failed to *inspire*, Charles.

While I...I became a *legend* in death and a *savior* upon my return.

I *always* come back, haven't you noticed? Perhaps that's *my* secondary mutation.

To *always come back*.

Don't *look* at me like that--you have no right to *judge* me.

We're establishing a *nation*, a *species*. I'll rest when my work is *done* and the devouring sickness of man and his ugly machines has been *erased* from our planet.

The drug is only for as long as I *need* it to boost my strength...

You!

You offer them a long and difficult process of *"peaceful integration"* with a species which is neither peaceful nor inclined to integrate with *any* other living thing.

fff

While I, Charles, I offer a *new map* of tomorrow.

And the triumph of *Homo Superior*.

This city is only the *beginning*.

I offer them Utopia! Here and now!

The shining morning of the mutants!

ASTEROID M...

You got this *Phoenix Force* inside you--right, Jeannie?

I know everybody's scared it's gonna eat you up and kill us all, but I have a *question*...

RRRRAAAA

Can it fly in *space?*

'Cause if it *can't*, we're on a *one-way trip.*

Nothing works in here.

Don't *talk*, Logan...telepathy conserves oxygen.

Let me tell you what I know about the *Phoenix.*

When I was thirteen, I realized I could control matter with my mind...just crude stuff at first...lifting things and throwing them across the room.

Then it progressed, with the Professor's help, until I was manipulating dozens of objects at once.

Now I'm learning to move molecules around and expand my senses beyond all boundaries.

So potentially you could do anything?

You could be like a god, Jeannie.

You could make your own universe and set it right...

The Phoenix isn't like that, Logan...it's more like...it burns away what doesn't work.

It eats planets and stars. It talks to me. And if I get too close it... it replaces me.

I'm still waiting for the note of hope here.

If this Phoenix is here to judge the Earth, then why the hell would it allow you to get killed before it's done?

Maybe it's judging me, too.

All I know is my body still needs oxygen and water to function... and there's nothing but vacuum out there...

...I can't fly through space. Not yet, not the way you mean.

There's *gotta* be a way *outta* this!

There's always a way out!

RRRAAUUUURRRRR

I'll find a way.

Esme, the little blonde girl from Emma's group, was caught dealing *Kick*...she tried to kill Emma and implicate young Angel...

...so where does *Magneto* fit into all of this?

NEW GENOSHA

So I paralyzed their precious *TV screens* and they offered to *negotiate.* Can you *imagine* the idea?!

Homo Inferior seems to have *forgotten* the unresolved matter of *16 million* murdered mutants in *Genosha.*

Well, I think we should have the most *appalling* series of *human sacrifices* as soon as possible.

It has to look like we're absolutely *serious* about changing the world, doesn't it?

I *am* serious and I will set the agenda for our campaign, child! Stop *interrupting* me!

Now...several of Charles' *X-Men* remain unaccounted for.

It will be *your* task to locate any troublesome survivors using the *Cerebra* machine, Esme.

Magneto sees *through* your bra-stuffing tricks, child! *Hyukk!*

Shut *up,* you freak!

Yes, Basilisk. shut up.

Beak, it's time we put some *steel* in you, boy.

You'll be *in charge* of tomorrow's mass extermination of all remaining *Homo Inferior* in New Genosha.

Extermination?

So...so say that again?

Sorry, my mind's drifting all over .I can't stop thinking about ice cream...

Or a long cold beer straight from the icebox...

...I'm saying somebody's been undermining the school and dividing up the X-Men, and now here we are in a deathtrap that looks exactly like Magneto's old headquarters.

Hell, maybe Magneto has nothing to do with it after all. Maybe it's Xorn!

Logan...I... I'm sorry. I didn't hear any of that...I've stopped sweating...that's a bad sign, isn't it?

I..I don't think I'm going to get through this after all..

...I don t feel good at all...

It can't happen like this, Logan.

Not to us.

We can't just die, can we?

One time I survived for six months under a glacier by eating strips off my own arm... healing factor grew the flesh right back...

...there's always a way, Jeannie.

Are you going to fight the sun for me?

What happened, Logan?

Something happened to you on that Weapon Plus space station, didn't it?

Something happened?

You bet something happened! The floor fell out from under my life is what happened!

You've been having flashbacks, I know that much...a woman with red hair calling your name... "James."

You thought you were starting to remember who you were... but...

But it could be a lie, Jeannie... it could be a cover story they implanted to keep me under control.

They made me into a Sentinel... part man, part metal, brainwashed and trained to murder my own people.

She wasn't calling my name, she was screaming for help. .

...they chose me because I liked to kill, Jeannie... all I'm good for's killing...

If you knew what I was you'd hate me.

No, it doesn't matter who you were...

...I know what you've gone through to be the good man you are now, Logan.

How could I ever hate you?

Jeannie... hey...

...you've been asleep...

Hurrr

Hang on there, Darlin'... any minute now Scott and Hank are gonna turn up waving flags.

..trying to concentrate... really hard ..

...can't find the Phoenix anywhere now... maybe there isn't...isn't a way this time...

Shhh

.. is Scott there...?

Scott ..I had to watch it all changing . had to let him go ..because of what love says...

...because the Phoenix burns and disinfects ..and dies to return ..

Scott's just going through some growing up.

It's okay. It's okay.

Blood and flame and sacrifice... it's not a place, it s not...

...What did he say? Scott.. about me...?

He said he was a little bit confused, but... but he still loves you, Jeannie.

Shhh

...I have to think, but I can't. . I can't think. . cuh-can't breathe...

. Logan.

...this is terrible, Logan... I feel so suh-scared and weird...

...everything's wruh-wrong inside me...horrible voices in the heat...

...Logan... I'm dying...

...I'm dying... *unnhh*...

.. don't... don't leave me...

Never. I'm right beside ya.

I'd die to save yer life, Darlin'.

I'd take all yer pain on myself.

But I *can't*.

I can only *take it away*.

KCHKK!

Ah, God.

Ah, God.

You and me, Jeannie.
You and me in a blaze of glory.

TO BE CONTINUED